General Policy G10 Pastoral Support Policy

1. Policy Statement

This Pastoral Support Policy:

- Emphasises the importance of providing consistently high quality pastoral support for students at all SAE campuses;
- Promotes fairness in opportunities for students with different learning needs;
- States guidelines for addressing student additional needs fairly and efficiently;
- States guidelines for care for students who are under 18:'vulnerable adults' and issues of Safeguarding.

2. Purpose

The policy purpose is to provide a standardised approach to the provision of pastoral support with consistent quality and efficiency for students in all SAE Institute campuses offering MU awards, and programmes feeding into MU awards (SAE Diplomas). To achieve this, the policy supports a multiple stage process for effective pastoral support, namely:

a) Identification of student needs;
b) Directing students to the best source of help;
c) Staff training for provision of pastoral support;
d) Monitoring and improvement of Pastoral Support;

The purpose of a Pastoral Support Officer (PSO) is to ensure that students can focus on their learning and minimise distractions due to disability, learning difficulties, health, legal and economic issues etc. during their studies at SAE Institute. The role should enhance student academic progress, academic achievement, student retention and widening participation, and by maximising student potential to benefit from the university experience, should enable students to reach their academic potential and enhance employability on graduation.

A core purpose is managing diversity and inclusion and encouraging effective integration of our students based on the Equality Act 2010 and SVGA Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006SVGA.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all modules and courses of SAE Institute validated by Middlesex University. Student Support at SAE Institute is divided into four areas:

a) Academic Support Officer/Study Support Officer (including library services);
b) Student Support Officer, Student Administration;
c) Career Support Officer/Career Advisor (Graduate Services);
d) Pastoral Support Officer (PSO).

This policy primarily addresses area 'c' above.

Initially the Pastoral Support Officer should be the first point of contact for students in need of support in general (including safeguarding), and should, in consultation with the student, identify the most appropriate follow-up support/advice. This might be Academic support or financial support etc. There will be one trained PSO on each campus (varying point of FTE depending on student numbers). In the event of a PSO being PT or off-campus when distressed students need help, the Campus Manager (or other role e.g. Academic Support Officer) should be prepared to step in and also have taken part in some training for PSOs.

We envisage the addition of coordinated support and oversight being provided initially by a Senior PSO, and later also by Territory PSOs (see organisational chart sec. 5.9).

4. Pastoral Support Officer: Key Functions

The PSO will:

a) Evaluate student need;
b) Provide advice;
c) Monitor progress and changes in student need;
d) Ensure that they (PSO) are updated on current local legislation and recommendations for supporting students, as well as policies and procedures from SAE.

5. Student Profiles

Areas of support by the PSO are, among others, for students with:

a. Dyslexia;
b. Autism/Asperger's syndrome
c. Emotional difficulties, e.g.
    c.1. Bereavement
    c.2. Depression: Feeling isolated or lonely
    c.3. Exam and study stress: Out of control, panic attacks, feelings of inadequacy
    c.4. Family issues: Partners, children, parenting, separation and divorce, homesickness
    c.5. Lack of confidence: Worried about failing, never being good enough, feeling judged
    c.6. Relationship difficulties: Family and friends, colleagues
d. Behavioural difficulties, e.g.
e. Repeated destructive behaviour: Self-harm, abusive relationships, alcohol, drugs
f. Health issues;
g. Learning difficulties;
h. Physical or sensory impairments
i. Problems with bullying and harassment
j. Needs of international students in similar behavioural domains.

In the event of a student needing counselling, the PSO will be able refer students to external professionals. Each campus should have a list of local providers of professional counselling, including options for funding this if necessary (state, charities etc.). This list should include guidelines as to the appropriateness of each provider for different counselling needs. The PSO should be active in establishing first contact with external providers of counselling together with the student.

6. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

• A01 Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Policy
• A07 Academic Grievance Policy
• G03 Equal Opportunity, Disability and Inclusion Policy
• G04 Student Engagement Policy
• G06 Non-Academic Grievance Policy
• SAE Quality Manual

(available online: http://uk.sae.edu/en-gb/content/10933/SAE_Regulations)

7. Associated Documents

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

• Campus Guide
• Extenuating Circumstances Form

- "No secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect under 18/vulnerable adults from abuse." (Department of Health)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005
- Data Protection Act. 13
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001
- SVGA Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006SVGA.

Further to this, local legislation on learning support for students should be consulted and made available in the Campus Guide.

8. Policy

Identification of Needs

All campuses should ensure that all students prior to enrolment have clearly available information about the pastoral support available to them, as well as a simple, confidential channel for making these needs known to SAE Institute. This information and registration procedure should be as easily available to existing students.

This process should:

a) Conform to all quality-related requirements, rules, policies and processes developed by SAE Institute and Middlesex University;
b) Meet the needs of a diverse student profile;
c) Address relevant national, professional and industry standards.

9. Acknowledgement of Disability

a) For students to benefit from certain kinds of help and concessions, diagnosis and proof of needs from an authorised professional may be required. E.g. time extension for exams etc.
b) The available help for different needs may vary slightly between countries. However we aspire to provide an equivalent level of help for all students in all countries and this PSO support framework (see section 5.9 & Fig. 1) addresses that aim.

10. Campus Responsibilities

a) To assist students in finding the best pathway for maximising their potential to benefit from the university experience, reach their academic potential and enhance employability on graduation;
b) To ensure that the campus has up-to-date information on local and SAE policy/legislation regarding support for students with learning and health difficulties as well as safeguarding of under 18/'vulnerable adults'.

11. Follow-up and Continuous Support

An individual support plan for each student with needs should be outlined and agreed during the first few meetings between the student and PSO.

Support for students can include:

- Regular one-to-one sessions
- In-class support where appropriate
- Small group sessions with a specialist tutor
- Help with study skills
- Providing learning resources in advance
- Providing learning resources in alternative formats
- Incorporating inclusive learning strategies
- Scheduling classes in rooms that are appropriate for your needs

- Alerting teachers to your needs in terms of teaching and learning materials
- Permitting necessary breaks
- Permitting the use of assistive technology for the purpose of learning activities
- Permitting the assistance of an independent disability support worker, e.g. sign interpreter, reader, note taker, or mobility support assistant.

12. Responsibilities of the Student

 a) To provide supporting evidence for specific claims of learning and medical difficulties;
 b) To inform the PSO of any changes in their needs and/or condition;
 c) To follow any action plan agreed on and fulfil any agreed commitments in the Individual Support Plan.

13. Safeguarding

Vulnerable Adult

A Vulnerable Adult is defined as someone over the age of 18 years who:

- "Is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation" (*Who Decides*, 2007)
- Is at risk of abuse in some form;
- Mental health diagnosis;
- Reduced ability to communicate with others;
- Evidenced abuse history;
- Has a reduced ability to protect themselves from assault, abuse or neglect.

14. PSO Responsibilities with Safeguarding

The PSO will also be responsible for matters of safeguarding under 18/vulnerable adults (at risk of abuse). All staff must report to the PSO any incidents with under 18/vulnerable adults, including disclosure of abuse, suspected abuse, distressed behaviour, accidently hurting an under 18/vulnerable adult and any suspected misunderstandings.

- Records will be kept of all such incidents and their outcomes and held by the PSO in accordance with the Data Protection Act. 13.
- If an under 18/vulnerable adult discloses abuse to a member of staff (or to a student working with vulnerable adults on SAE Institute's behalf), they MUST report it to the PSO.
- Staff must indicate to an under 18/vulnerable adult that they are obliged to do so and cannot keep the matter confidential.
- Any allegations involving a member of staff and an under 18/vulnerable adult should be reported to the Campus Manager and Director of Human Resources.

15. The Role of Pastoral Support Officer

Each campus/campus group (geographically close campuses who may share resources e.g. Amsterdam & Rotterdam) should have a dedicated member of staff appointed as Pastoral Support Officer. They will be responsible for face-to-face support and maintaining local knowledge base and standards in pastoral support (see section 3.1 and current HR package for role descriptions), and for effective implementation of this policy in the local context.

In addition to local campus PSOs, a 'Senior Pastoral Support Officer' (SPSO) may be appointed to coordinate all PSO services between campuses offering MU programmes (see section 5.9). This SPSO will have general responsibility for:

- The development of guides and procedures for handling emergencies with distressed students;
- Improving the current procedures of supporting with learning difficulties by providing specialist help;
- Developing relationships with organisations that specialise with mobility issues, mental disorders, psychological issues (counselling services);
- Train and raise awareness of specialist support at SAE Institute, in particular campus PSOs.

16. Staff Training and Development

Staff development systems specifically for these roles are essential for ensuring a standardised and comparative approach throughout the SAE Institute network. Appointment to the role PSO and Senior PSO should be through normal HR interview procedures and approval, having met the criteria as defined by the Role Description for PSO.

- Once appointed all PSOs should take part in an induction programme delivered by a Senior PSO;
- Regional and campus PSOs should participate in regular webinars and synchronous discussions online to discuss current issues and share good practice;
- Coaching and reference materials relevant to the role should be made available online to all PSOs.

17. Monitoring and Improvement of Pastoral Support

An envisaged tiered system of PSOs should be in place to ensure regular updates of procedure, continual training and discussion, as well as dissemination of new information in the field and best practice between campuses. Eventually a network wide Senior PSO and a Regional/Territory PSO should ensure that this sharing of information and appropriate training is maintained.

- EU wide Senior PSO (envisaged)
- Territory Senior PSO (envisaged) (Europe North, Europe South, UK, Germany)
- Campus Pastoral Support (confirmed) (e.g. FTE about 0.5).

The initial system to comprise of Campus PSOs at each campus overseen by a Senior PSO in UK:
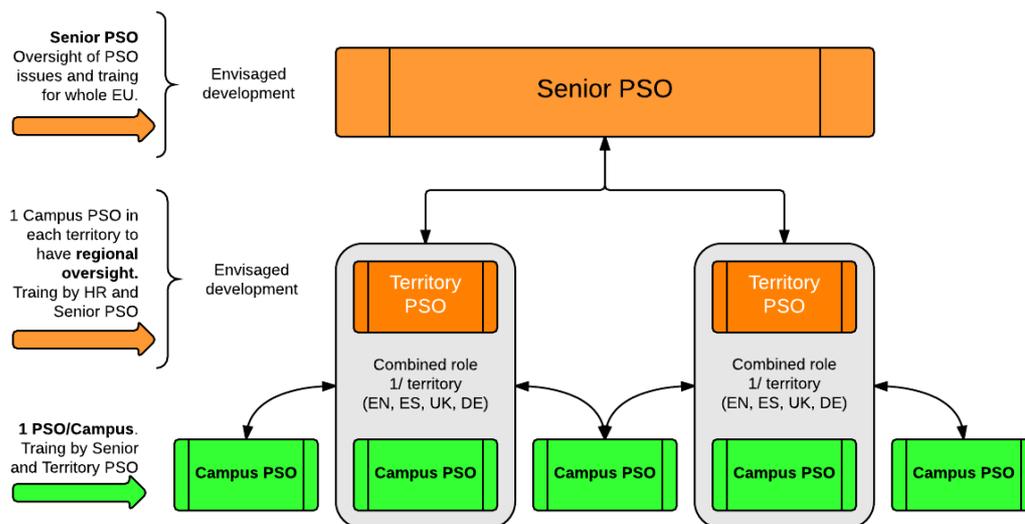

Figure 1 The proposed organisational chart for PSO roles (NB the Territory PSO role is something planned for future implementation after initial roll-out of the system and feedback from the first phase of the PSO system).

18. Policy History

Last Review: February 2015

Policy Review Date: 1 September 2018